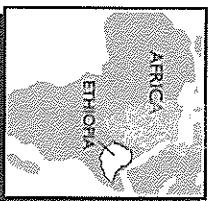


then had a population of around 50 million people. By the mid 1980s the whole Sahel was drought-stricken.

In the heart of the Sahel, Lake Chad, the world's largest freshwater lake, was reduced to only 10 per cent of its usual size—it was 2600 square kilometres instead of 26 000 square kilometres. **Fishing villages on its shores were left high and dry 20 kilometres from water!** Satellite photographs revealed that 95 per cent of the total vegetation of the Sahel had died or had been eaten out by starving animals. Some 37 million people without crops, animals, or resources of any kind faced death by starvation.

Ethiopia—a story of disaster



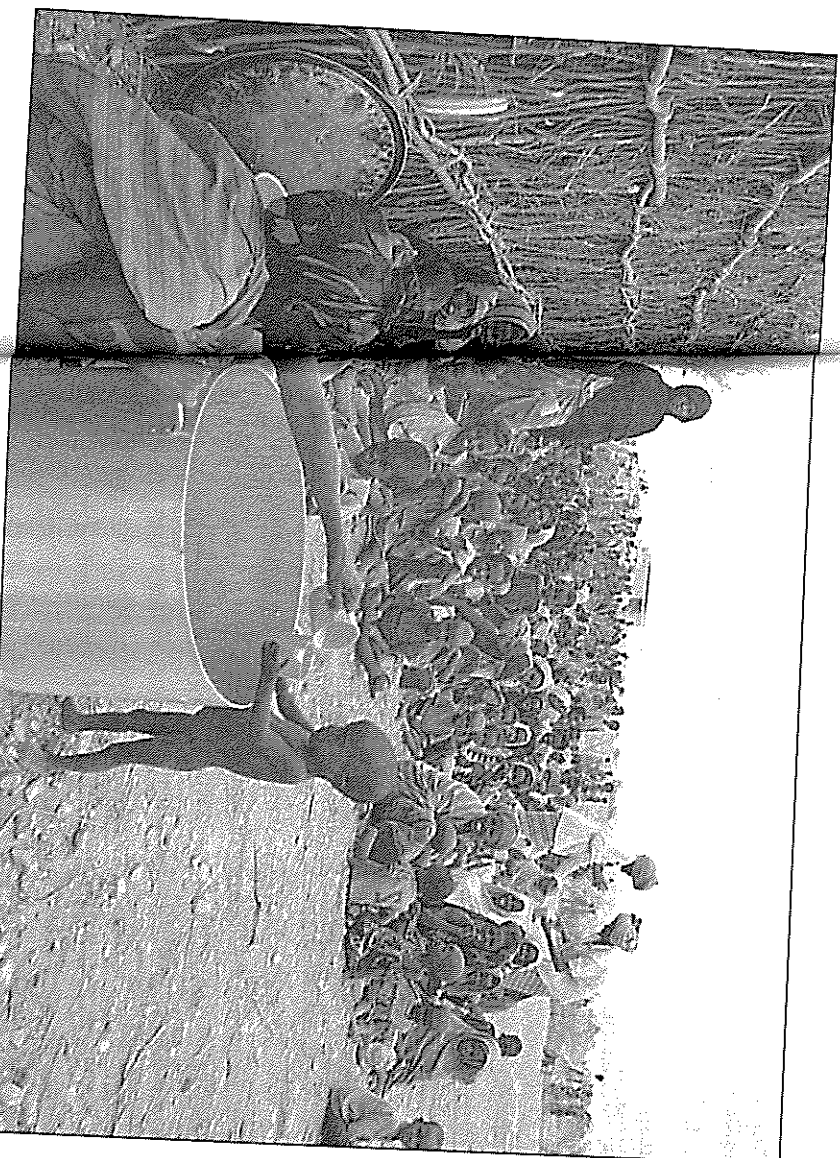
In Ethiopia the drought was particularly bad. Forty-three aid camps were set up in an attempt to feed

approximately 1 million starving people. In the northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigre over 40 per cent of the population was starving. At the height of the famine in 1984–5 around 6000 people a day died in these regions alone. Most deaths occurred in the aid camps because of malnutrition, overcrowding and unsanitary conditions which led to disease.

A enormous aid effort was needed but unfortunately many of the wealthier countries were unaware of the crisis. It was only when pictures of the tragedy in Ethiopia began appearing on television and in newspapers that aid began to pour in.

Then, as so often happens, there was the problem of how to distribute the aid. The country

● A NURSE working in a food camp said of the people there: 'They look like something you'd see in a concentration camp. You take those you can help and you try to save them. But a lot of them you can't save and they just die. You look at their sad, hollow eyes and you fight back your tears because the others need you.'



Of the 25 000 refugees who took shelter at this aid camp in Ethiopia, 6000 were children under five